AGENDA
ATHENS PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2025 AT 11:30 AM

Streaming is available at www.ci.athens.oh.us/video

Establish Quorum

Disposition of Minutes:

- February 5, 2025

Cases

Communications

- American Structurepoint to report on the public input that they have received thus far on the Neighborhood Corridor Overlay Zone

- Review the code audit American Structurepoint is conducting

Reports

Opportunity for citizens to speak about items not covered on agenda

Announcements & Other Business:

- March 5, 2025

Adjournment

The City of Athens supports the Americans with Disabilities Act. Requests for reasonable accommodation may be made with the ADA Coordinator in the City Building or by calling 592-3367.

Athens City Planning Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 11:30 a.m.

A regular meeting of the Athens City Planning Commission was held in City Council Chambers, third floor of City Hall, on February 5, 2025.

Attendees: David Mott, Robert Delach

1.Call to Order Chair John Kotowski called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. and administered the oath to those in the audience intending to speak before the Commission. A quorum was established with all members present.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

- Chris Knisely – Present
- John Kotowski, Chair – Present
- Steve Patterson, Mayor – Present
- Austin Phillips, Vice-Chair – Present
- Andy Stone, Service-Safety Director – Present

STAFF:

- David Riggs, Code Enforcement Director – Present
- Meghan Jennings, City Planner – Present

2. Disposition of Minutes: Chris Knisely moved to approve the minutes from the December 18, 2024 meeting. Austin Phillips seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0, with Steve Patterson abstaining.

3. Cases: There were no cases presented at this meeting.

4. Communications
Cable Lane Annexation

- **David Riggs** Per zoning code 23-02-03, annexations need to go to the Planning Commission before going to the City Council. The board shall make a recommendation to the city council about what zone they would propose the annexation should come into the city as.
    - discussed the proposed annexation of a 34-acre parcel on Cable Lane.
    - This is a recommendation, with no formal case being presented.

    - The attorney for petitioner and agent, David Mott, is proposing the land be zoned R-1.
    - Riggs noted that public utility agreements may be in place for further development.
- **Steve Patterson** recommended straightforward zoning as R-1.
- **Chris Knisely** asked about housing, noting clusters of homes. Riggs confirmed that the annexation zone could be adjusted when someone enters the city, not necessarily requiring R-1 zoning.
- **Andy Stone** suggested the area could be recommended for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) in addition to the R-1 zoning if a subdivision or cluster homes were to be placed on that land.
- **Andy Stone** clarified that the property at the top of Cable Lane was separate from the annexation.
- **Knisely** asked about public notice; Riggs confirmed notifications would be handled at the City Council level.

Motion: Steve Patterson motioned to make a recommendation to city council to bring the annexation in to the city as R-1. Austin Phillips seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. Reports from Director of Development & Code Enforcement and City Planner

- **David Riggs (Code Enforcement Director):**
    - No report was given.
- **Meghan Jennings (City Planner):**
    - Jennings discussed a proposed development, and the withdrawal of a previous application related to Hooper Street. A new application will be submitted.
    - **Austin Phillips** asked if both projects would begin simultaneously, to which David Mott responded that one project would begin this year, and the other would follow in the next.
    - **Chris Knisely** inquired about the timeline for project findings. Mott stated that it was still uncertain.
    - **Steve Patterson** asked if the guidelines are coming through OFA to which David Mott responded that he believes the guidelines will be coming from OFA.

Upcoming Event: Jennings announced that in two weeks, there will be a public open house regarding the proposed neighborhood corridor overlay zone held at the Fire Station on February 18, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. They will also offer one-on-one stakeholder sessions for interested local businesses. A flyer has been emailed to the Commission.
Community Center Discussion Update:

- **John Kotowski** asked if there were any takeaways from the previous community center discussion.
- **Steve Patterson** reported that he presented six potential solutions. He noted that even with the loss of businesses, we gained around 21 new businesses. He also noted that market pressures in Athens were varied, with people opting to shop online due to changes in behaviors.
- **Andy Stone** inquired about policies that could be enacted to assist businesses. He suggested that zoning and other codes should capitalize on these pressures and create new models for commerce.
- **Chris Knisely** asked about Struture Point working further with the city to look at zoning.
- **Meghan Jennings** mentioned that following the open house, a presentation will be made at the next Planning Commission meeting.

6. Opportunity for Citizens to Speak: There were no citizens who requested to speak at this time.

7. Announcements & Other Business

- **Andy Stone** mentioned being approached again with zoning issues related to the Conestoga huts, mobile homes, and other alternative housing types. Also states the Planning Commission needs to discuss broadening the allowance of people living in mobile living spaces and talk about other types of construction that were prohibited in the past but are more common in recent times.
- **David Riggs** acknowledged that the current code does not address these types of homes and noted the need for code adjustments.
- **Chris Knisely** suggested adding accessory dwelling units to the code.
- **Meghan Jennings** suggested that public engagement and education about how ADU's would function in Athens is important.
- **Andy Stone** asked if there was any guidance or questions regarding tiny homes and similar structures.
- **Riggs** noted that the state mandates a minimum size of 320 square feet for tiny homes, including kitchen, bedroom, and living space. He also discussed defining Conestoga huts and restricting their placement near parks and schools. Also, container homes would need a minimum of two containers and would need to look more like a home with a roof and siding.
- **Robert Delach/attendee** agreed that code changes were necessary to include these types of homes and provided an example of a garage converted into a rental property, which benefited the homeowner.
- **John Kotowski** asked Riggs about a tiny home built on Ring Street; Riggs confirmed it was a multiple-room small home.

- **Steve Patterson** reflected on the progress of the University Estates and Homestead Court developments, noting improvements like ADA-compliant sidewalks and ramps.
- **Austin Phillips** suggested developing areas outside of the downtown core for shipping containers and tiny homes, possibly offering transportation to the city.

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting of the Athens City Planning Commission will be held on February 19, 2025.

8. Adjournment
There being no further business, **Austin Phillips** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Chris Knisely** seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Monica Flowers, Secretary, Athens City Planning Commission